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Report of the Economic and Social Council for 2003*

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* The present report is a preliminary version of those sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council relating to the organizational and resumed organizational sessions for 2003 and the substantive session of 2003. The section relating to the resumed substantive session will be issued as an addendum to the present report. The entire report will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/58/3/Rev.1).

** Part two of this preliminary version of the report of the Council, containing chaps. IV-IX and annexes I-III, will be issued separately in document A/58/3 (Part II). The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council at the organizational and resumed organizational sessions for 2003 and the substantive session of 2003 are being issued initially in documents E/2003/INF/2 and Add.1-3 and Add.1/Corr.1. Those adopted at the resumed substantive session will be issued in document E/2003/INF/2/Add.4. The resolutions and decisions will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 1* (E/2003/99).

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by or brought to the attention of the General Assembly

In 2003, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolutions and decisions that call for action by the General Assembly. The relevant paragraphs of those resolutions and decisions are summarized below.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

By decisions 2003/285 and 2003/286, the Council recommended that the General Assembly take a decision at its fifty-eighth session on the question of enlarging the membership of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 65 to 66 States.

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council

Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/201 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

By resolution 2003/3, the Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake further analytical work on the issue of funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session in the context of the triennial comprehensive policy review.

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

Delegation of formal authority in matters of personnel of the United Nations Population Fund

By decision 2003/224, the Council recommended to the General Assembly that, as proposed in decision 2003/13 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund adopted at its annual session of 2003, formal authority in matters of personnel of the United Nations Population Fund be delegated by the Secretary-General to the Executive Director of the Fund.

Humanitarian affairs segment

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

By resolution 2003/5, the Council requested the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to its resolution in his next report to the Council and the General Assembly on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits: follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development

International Conference on Financing for Development

By resolution 2003/47, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to contribute to the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, both in the context of its general mandate to follow-up and support the implementation of commitments adopted at all major United Nations conferences, including the Millennium Summit, and as an important process in its own right, and in that regard attached priority to four broad tasks related to follow-up activities: (a) to promote coherence and an integrated approach within the United Nations; (b) to intensify interactions with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, as well as other institutional stakeholders; (c) to continue involving other relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations and the private sector; and (d) to prepare inputs for consideration by the General Assembly.

Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits: review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries

By resolution 2003/17, the Council requested the Secretary-General to make, in consultation with Member States, recommendations to facilitate the participation of the delegations of the least developed countries at the annual substantive sessions of the Council and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli Occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

By resolution 2003/59, the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations agencies.

Economic and environment questions: sustainable development

Preparations for an international meeting to review the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

By resolution 2003/55 and decision 2003/283, the Council, recalling General Assembly resolution 57/262 and reiterating the provisions of decision II adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development eleventh session, in particular its paragraph 9, recommended to the Assembly that travel and subsistence allowance for participants from small island developing States to the preparatory meetings and the international meeting to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States be provided from the funds designated by donors for that purpose in the voluntary trust fund established by the Assembly in resolution 57/262.

Future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development

By resolution 2003/61, the Council, having considered the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its eleventh session, decided to invite the General Assembly to consider using the resources previously devoted to the former ad hoc intersessional working groups of the Commission on Sustainable Development to support the participation of representatives of member States of the Commission in one of their respective regional meetings in each implementation cycle. The Council also recommended to the Assembly that resources released by the termination of the work of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development, whose work had been transferred to the Commission on Sustainable Development, could be used to support the work of the Commission.

Economic and environmental questions: United Nations Forum on Forests

Trust Fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests

By resolution 2003/63, the Council recommended that the General Assembly decide that support to participants from developing countries, with priority to the least developed countries, as well as from countries with economies in transition, may be provided from the Trust Fund for travel and daily subsistence allowance from funds designated for that purpose.

Economic and environmental questions: transport of dangerous goods

Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

By resolution 2003/64, the Council took note of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals for the biennium 2003-2004 as well as noting the recommendations of the Committee regarding staff resources and invited the General Assembly to consider the issue in the context of its review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

Social and human rights questions: advancement of women

Revitalization and strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

By resolution 2003/57, the Council requested the General Assembly, at its fifty-eighth session, to consider the final report of the Working Group on the Future Operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the resolution to the fifty-ninth session of the Assembly.

By the same resolution, the Council decided to amend article III of the statute of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women to replace the Board of Trustees with an Executive Board. The Board shall report periodically to the Economic and Social Council and, where appropriate, to the General Assembly. Article IV of the statute, which was also amended, stated that the Director of the Institute should submit to the Economic and Social Council or to the General Assembly, as appropriate, reports approved by the Board.

Social and human rights questions: social development

Preparations for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004

By resolution 2003/10, the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution contained therein.

Policies and programmes involving youth

By resolution 2003/11, the Council invited the General Assembly to consider devoting, at its sixtieth session, in 2005, two plenary meetings to review the situation of youth and achievements produced in the implementation of the Programme of Action 10 years after its adoption. The Council also invited the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to provide the Assembly, at its sixtieth session, through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-third session, with a comprehensive report on the priority areas of youth identified in the Programme of Action, calling upon the experience of the Member States, organizations, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as well as the regional commissions and youth organizations, in their multidisciplinary work for and with youth.

National and international cooperation for social development: implementation of the social objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

The Council decided to bring its resolution 2003/13 to the attention of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session during its consideration of the agenda item entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support".

Modalities for the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

The Council requested the Secretary-General to include in his report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session information on the implementation of its resolution 2003/14.

Agreed conclusions on national and international cooperation for social development

By resolution 2003/15, the Council endorsed the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission for Social Development with respect to its priority theme at its forty-first session and in which the Commission invited the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to continue to include consideration of the integration of economic and social policies as one of the thematic areas to be addressed in future debates.

Social and human rights questions: crime prevention and criminal justice

Strengthening international cooperation in preventing and combating trafficking in persons and protecting victims of such trafficking

By resolution 2003/20, the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution contained therein.

International cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime: assistance to States in capacity-building with a view to facilitating the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

By resolution 2003/21, the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution contained therein.

Strengthening international cooperation and technical assistance in promoting the implementation of the universal conventions and protocols related to terrorism within the framework of the activities of the Centre for International Crime Prevention

By resolution 2003/22, the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution contained therein.

Preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

By resolution 2003/23, the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution contained therein.

Social and human rights questions: human rights

The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

By resolution 2003/45, the Council approved Commission Human Rights resolution 2003/28, in which the Commission highlighted the importance of enhancing the international community's response to violence by strengthening prevention efforts at the national level and through international cooperation, recommended that the General Assembly declare 2007 the United Nations Year for Violence Prevention and requested the Commission on Human Rights to submit to the Council a draft programme of action for the Year.

Human rights situation of the Lebanese detainees in Israel

By decision 2003/238, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/8 to request the Secretary-General to bring the resolution to the attention of the Government of Israel and to call upon it to comply with the resolution's provisions. The Council also endorsed the request of the Commission to the Secretary-General that he report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to the Commission at its sixtieth session on the results of his efforts in this regard.

Situation of human rights in Myanmar

By decision 2003/239, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/12 to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, as contained in Commission resolution 1992/58 of 3 March 1992, for a further year, and requested the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to report to the Commission at its sixtieth session.

Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

By decision 2003/240, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/15 to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for a further year and to request the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to report to the Commission at its sixtieth session.

Situation of human rights in Burundi

By decision 2003/241, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/16 to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur by one year and to request to the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report on the human rights situation in Burundi to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and a report to the Commission at its sixtieth session, giving her work a gender-specific dimension.

The right to food

By decision 2003/244, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/25 to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food for a further three years and to request the Special Rapporteur to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to the Commission at its sixtieth session on the implementation of resolution 2003/25.

World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

By decision 2003/246, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/30:

(a) To request the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action to prepare complementary international standards to strengthen and update international instruments against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in all their aspects, to convene its upcoming sessions for an initial period of three years, while encouraging it to work effectively to fulfil its mandate, to convene its second session of 10 working days, to focus on areas decided upon in its recommendations, namely, poverty, education and complementary standards, and to report on progress in this regard at the sixtieth session of the Commission;

(b) That the working group of experts on people of African descent should convene its future sessions for an initial period of three years, to encourage it to work effectively towards the fulfilment of its mandate and to request it to convene its second session of 10 working days and report to the Commission at its sixtieth session on progress towards the fulfilment of its mandate;

(c) To recommend that the General Assembly, after considering the analytical report of the Secretary-General on the extent of implementation of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial

Discrimination, to be submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/195, consider the closure of the Third Decade;

(d) To recommend that the General Assembly, in the coming decade of activities to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, place emphasis on the concrete implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on the basis of a broad-based consensus on the importance of the anti-discrimination struggle worldwide;

(e) To request that the Secretary-General provide the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance with all the necessary human and financial assistance to carry out his mandate efficiently, effectively and expeditiously and to enable him to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance

By decision 2003/252, the Council endorsed the request of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/54 that the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief should submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and report to the Commission at its sixtieth session.

Human rights defenders

By decision 2003/255, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/64 to extend the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights defenders for a further three years and also approved the Commission's request that the Special Representative continue to report on her activities to the General Assembly and the Commission.

Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

By decision 2003/256, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/68 to request the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a report on the implementation of resolution 2003/68 to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to the Commission at its sixtieth session.

Situation of human rights in Afghanistan

By decision 2003/257, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/77 to request the Secretary-General to appoint an independent expert for a period of one year to develop, in strict collaboration with the Afghan Transitional Authority, including the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, as well as with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, a programme of advisory services to ensure the full respect and protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law and to seek and receive information about and report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan in an effort to prevent human rights violations.

The Council also approved the Commission's request that the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, continue to review the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan and submit a report to the General Assembly and the Commission.

Situation of human rights in Sierra Leone

By decision 2003/259, the Council endorsed the request of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/80 to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to the Commission at its sixtieth session on the human rights situation in Sierra Leone, including with reference to reports from the Human Rights Section of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone.

Situation of human rights in Iraq

By decision 2003/262, the Council endorsed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2003/84 to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, as contained in Commission resolution 1991/74 and subsequent resolutions, for a further year, and to request the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report on the situation of human rights in Iraq, focusing on newly available information about violations of human rights and international law by the Government of Iraq over many years, to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session and to report to the Commission at its sixtieth session.

Social and human rights questions: Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Proposal for a second international decade of the world's indigenous people

By decision 2003/306, the Council decided to transmit to the General Assembly the recommendation contained in draft decision VII, adopted by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its second session, regarding a second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, with a view to initiating consideration of such a decade, taking into account, inter alia, the forthcoming review by the Economic and Social Council in 2004, and further decided to initiate this review.

Consideration of the request for conversion of the International Civil Defense Organization, an intergovernmental organization with observer status with the Economic and Social Council, to a specialized agency of the United Nations system

Agreement between the United Nations and the World Tourism Organization

By resolution 2003/2, the Council, having considered the text of the draft agreement negotiated by its Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies and the World Tourism Organization Committee on the Negotiations for the conversion of the Organization into a specialized agency, in accordance with Article 57 and Article 63, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, and aware that the text of the draft agreement was noted with satisfaction by the

Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization on 4 June 2003, recommended that the General Assembly approve the text of the draft agreement at its fifty-eighth session.

Chapter II

Special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization

1. In accordance with paragraph 88 of annex I to General Assembly resolution 50/227 and paragraph 69 (b) of the Monterrey Consensus, the Council held a special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization at its 7th and 8th plenary meetings, on 14 April 2003 (for the proceedings, see E/2003/SR.7 and 8). It had before it a note by the Secretary-General on increased coherence, coordination and cooperation for the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development at all levels one year after the Conference (E/2003/50).

2. At its 7th plenary meeting, on 14 April 2003, the President of the Council made an introductory statement.

3. At the same meeting, the Deputy Secretary-General addressed the meeting.

4. Also at the same meeting, the President of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly addressed the meeting.

5. At the same meeting, the President of the Council introduced the following panellists who made presentations: Trevor Manuel, Minister of Finance of South Africa and Chairperson of the Development Committee; Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany; Mary Whelan, Chairperson of the Trade Policy Review Body of the World Trade Organization; and Fouad Siniora, Chairperson of the Group of 24, Minister of Finance of Lebanon.

6. The President of the Council also introduced the following panellists by institutional organizations who made presentations: Eduardo Aninat, Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF); Shengman Zhang, Managing Director, World Bank; and Francisco Thompson-Flores, Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

7. After the presentations, the Council adjourned its plenary meeting and moved onto round tables 1, 2, 3 and 4.

8. Round table 1 was chaired by Trevor Manuel, Chairperson of the Development Committee and Minister of Finance of South Africa, and co-chaired by Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

9. Round table 2 was chaired by Hilde Frafjord Johnson, Minister of International Development of Norway, and co-chaired by Francisco Thompson-Flores, Deputy-Director General of the World Trade Organization.

10. Round table 3 was chaired by Mary Whelan, Chairperson of the Trade Policy Review Body of the World Trade Organization, and co-chaired by Shengman Zhang, Managing Director of the World Bank Group.

11. Round table 4 was chaired by Fathallah Oualalou, Minister of Finance of Morocco, and co-chaired by Eduardo Aninat, Deputy Managing-Director of IMF.

12. The four round tables addressed respectively the themes of: (a) systemic issues; (b) financial cooperation; (c) policy coherence in the area of trade and investment; and (d) domestic, economic and social policies.

13. At its 8th plenary meeting, on 14 April 2003, the Council resumed the special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization and heard oral reports from: the Chairperson of the Development Committee (round table 1), the Minister of International Development of Norway (round table 2), the Chairperson of the Trade Policy Review Body of the World Trade Organization (round table 3) and the Minister of Finance of Morocco (round table 4), on the outcome of the four round tables.

Exchange of views among the participants

14. At the same meeting, the Council held an exchange of views among the participants and the representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Greece (on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries associated with the European Union (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia) and the other associated countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey)), Andorra, Mexico, Finland, Peru, Portugal, Brazil, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Argentina made statements.

15. Also at the same meeting, the observer for the Holy See made a statement.

16. At the same meeting, the representative of the World Bank, the Dean of the Executive Board of the Bank, made a statement.

17. The Council heard statements by representatives of the Interim Facilitating Group for the Follow-up to Monterrey, a non-governmental organization, and the Business Council for the United Nations from the business sector.

18. The representatives of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) made statements.

Closing of the meeting

19. At its 8th plenary meeting, on 14 April 2003, the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs made a statement.

20. The President of the Economic and Social Council made a statement and declared the special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization closed.

Chapter III
High-level segment

Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development

Opening of the session

1. The high-level segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Council was held at its 13th to 18th plenary meetings, from 30 June to 2 July 2003 (for the proceedings, see E/2002/SR.13-18). In accordance with Council decision 2002/309 of 19 December 2002, the theme for the high-level segment was "Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development" (agenda item 2). The Council had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development (E/2003/51);

(b) *World Economic and Social Survey, 2003* (E/2003/70, chap. I);

(c) Relevant section of the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its fifth session (E/2003/33, Suppl. 13, chap. II);

(d) Statement submitted by Franciscans International, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (E/2003/NGO/1);

(e) Statement submitted by Soroptomists International, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (E/2003/NGO/2).

2. At the 13th meeting, on 30 July 2003, the President of the Economic and Social Council declared the substantive session of 2003 open.

3. At the same meeting, the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed the Council.

Policy dialogue and discussion on important developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation with executive heads of international trade and finance institutions of the United Nations system, on key issues on the global economy

4. At the 13th meeting, on 30 June 2003, the Council held a high-level policy dialogue on important developments and key issues in the world economy and international economic cooperation with executive heads of international trade and finance institutions of the United Nations system. At the same meeting, statements were made by the panellists, Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); Mamphela Ramphele, Managing Director of the World Bank; Francisco Thompson Flores, Deputy

Director-General of the World Trade Organization; and Reinhard H. Munzberg, Special Representative to the United Nations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

5. At the same meeting, during the exchange of views, the representatives of Brazil, Pakistan, Benin, the Russian Federation, Uganda, Peru, Luxembourg and Nepal made statements. Also, at the same meeting, the panellists responded to queries raised. The representative of the European Community also made an intervention as well as the observer of the Third World Network, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

Opening of the high-level segment

6. At its 14th plenary meeting on 30 June 2003, the President of the Council opened the high-level segment and the Council began its consideration of agenda item 2.

7. At the same meeting, the Council heard introductory statements by the organizers of the four round tables, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Executive Coordinator of the Millennium Development Goals Campaign, the Executive Director, World Food Programme (WFP), the President of the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD), the Managing Director of the World Bank and the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

8. Also at the same meeting, statements were also made by the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime, and the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Africa and the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. The President of the Council suspended the meeting.

Ministerial round tables

Round table 1
Natural resources and rural development in developing countries

9. The round table was co-chaired by Valli Moosa, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa, and Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO.

10. Introductory presentations were made by: Valli Moosa, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa; Christina Amoako Nuama, Former Minister for Lands and Forestry, Education, Environment, Science and Technology of Ghana; Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; William Jackson, Assistant Director-General and Director of the Global Programme, World Conservation Union (IUCN); and George McGovern, former Senator and former United States Ambassador to FAO and WFP in Rome. The Director-General of FAO, who acted as co-chairperson of the round table, also made some remarks.

11. Statements were made by the representatives of Ethiopia, the United States of America, the Netherlands, Nepal, Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Botswana, Australia, Nigeria and Bhutan. In addition, representatives of the Uganda Land Alliance (member of the International Land Coalition), the International Fertilizer Industry Association and the International Federation of Agriculture Producers also made statements. The representative of the Ford Foundation made a statement. The panellists responded to queries raised.

Round table 2
Integrated approach to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the area of rural development

12. The round table was co-chaired by Jan O. Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation of Sweden, and Eveline Herfkens, Executive Coordinator of the Millennium Development Goals Campaign.

Goal 1

13. Mr. Carlos Magariños, Director-General of UNIDO, made an introductory statement. Interventions were made by the representatives of Italy (on behalf of the European Union), Uganda, Zimbabwe, Nicaragua, Denmark, Malaysia, China, Ethiopia, Peru and Chile. The representative of the Asian Non-Governmental Organizations Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development also made an intervention.

Goals 2-7

14. Presentations were made by Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA, and James T. Morris, Executive Director of WFP.

15. Interventions were made by the representatives of the United States, Ethiopia and Uganda. Interventions were also made by the representatives of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, Franciscans International, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous People International Centre for Policy Research and Education).

Goal 8

16. Interventions were made by the representatives of Austria, Norway, Brazil, Ireland, Nigeria, Finland, Azerbaijan and Argentina. The representative of the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement-International (OISCA International) also made an intervention.

Round table 3
Global partnerships for rural development

17. The round table was co-chaired by Mamphela Ramphele, Managing Director of the World Bank, and Lennart Bage, President of IFAD.

18. Presentations were made by María Eugenia Brizuela de Ávila, Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador; Jim Harvey, Head of Profession, Rural Livelihoods, Department for International Development, London; Stewart Wallis, Livelihoods

Director, Oxfam; and Keith Jones, Issue and Policy Manager, Stewardship and Sustainable Agriculture, CropLife International. Interventions were made by the representatives of Uganda, Ethiopia and Chile, as well as by the observers for Mexico and the Holy See. Interventions were also made by the representatives of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, and the Common Fund for Commodities. The Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Africa made an intervention. Interventions were also made by the representatives of the International Land Coalition and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers.

19. The Co-Chairpersons made concluding remarks.

Round table 4
Rural/urban interface and slums

20. The round table was co-chaired by Ivan Šimonović, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia, and Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (Habitat).

21. Presentations were made by Ralia Odinga, Minister of Roads, Public Works and Housing of Kenya, Husni-Abughaida, Minister of Housing and Public Works of Jordan, Edgar D. Maokola-Majogo, Minister of State, Poverty Eradication of the United Republic of Tanzania, Holger Magel, President of the International Federation of Surveyors, Mercedes Bresso, President of the World Association of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination, and Alejandro Mackinnon of Genève-Tiers-Monde.

22. Statements were made by the representatives of Malaysia and Nigeria, as well as by the observer for Tunisia. The representative of the World Tourism Organization made a statement. Representatives of the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance and the Canton of Geneva also made statements.

23. The Co-Chairpersons and the lead discussants summarized the outcome of the round tables.

24. The Council resumed its 14th plenary meeting and the President invited the Co-Chairpersons of the round tables to report on the outcomes: Valli Moosa, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa, reported on round table 1, on "Natural resources and rural development in developing countries"; Jan O. Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation of Sweden, reported on round table 2, on "Integrated approach to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the area of rural development"; María Eugenia Brizuela de Ávila, Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, reported on round table 3, on "Global partnerships for rural development"; and Ivan Šimonović, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia, reported on round table 4, on "Rural/urban interface and slums". The President of the Council made a concluding statement on the round tables.

25. At its 15th plenary meeting, on 1 July 2003, the Council heard introductory statements by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee for Development Policy.

26. At the same meeting, statements were made by Mohamed Bennouna, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations (on behalf of the Group

of 77 and China); Mario Baccini, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy (on behalf of the European Union); Juli Minoves-Triquell, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra; Paula Lehtomäki, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development of Finland; Yuri V. Fedotov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Shinako Tsuchiya, Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Japan; Antonio Ruíz García, Vice-Minister of Rural Development of Mexico; Jan O. Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy of Sweden; Miguel von Hoegen, Secretary for Programming and Planning of the Presidency of Guatemala; Kashiram Rana, Minister for Rural Development of India; María Eugenia Brizuela de Ávila, Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador; Rosa Elena Simeón Negrín, Minister of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba; Valli Moosa, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa; Ovidiu Ionescu, Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests of Romania; Ivan Šimonović, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia; and Tom Kitt, Minister of State for Overseas Development and Human Rights of Ireland.

27. At its 16th plenary meeting, on 1 July 2003, statements were made by Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations; Addisu Legesse, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Rural Development of Ethiopia; Mauricio Gómez Lacayo, Vice-Minister, Secretary-General for Economic Cooperation of Nicaragua; Justas Vincas Paleckis, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania; Sergiy Melnik, State Secretary, Ministry of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine; J. G. Moyo, Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare of Zimbabwe; Bruce Montador, Canadian International Development Agency; Joab H. O. Omino, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya; Ove Ullerup, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Caroline Millar, First Assistant Secretary, International Organizations and Legal Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia; Serge Chappatte, Vice-Director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; John D. Negroponte, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations; Ronaldo Motta Sardenberg, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations; Stafford O. Neil, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations; Chung Eui-Yong, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations; Arye Arazi, Deputy Director General, Head of the Center for International Cooperation of Israel; Michael O'Neill, Counsellor to the United Nations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and Henri Djombo, Minister of Forests Economy and the Environment of the Republic of the Congo.

28. At the same meeting, statements were also made by the representatives of IFAD and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Also at the same meeting, representatives of the Commission of the European Community and the Common Fund for Commodities made statements.

29. Also at the same meeting, the representatives of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also made a statement. Representatives of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations and the Fondation pour la Promotion Sociale de la Culture also made statements.

30. At its 17th plenary meeting, on 2 July 2003, statements were made by Petko Draganov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria; Séraphine Wakana, Minister for Development Planning and Reconstruction of Burundi; Immanuel Ngatjizeko, Director-General of the National Planning Commission of Namibia; Mohd. Effendi Norwawi, Minister of Agriculture of Malaysia; G. Ali Khoshroo, Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Semaluka Kiwanuka, Minister of State for Luwero Triangle, Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda; João Carrilho, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Mozambique; Maokola Majogo, Minister of State, Office of the Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania; Rosella Cominetti, Director-General of Production of the Instituto de Desarrollo Agropecuario, Ministry of Agriculture of Chile; Bjørn Skogmo, Deputy Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway; Abdulwahab A. Attar, Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Bernard Kessedjian, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Hernán Escudero, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Jaynarain Meetoo, Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations; Sha Zukang, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva; and Toufiq Ali, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

31. At the same meeting, the Secretary-General of the Institution for the Use of Micro-Algae Spirulina Against Malnutrition made a statement. Also at the same meeting, the Assistant Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) made a statement. At the same meeting, the representative of the World Federation of United Nations Associations made a statement.

32. At its 18th plenary meeting, on 2 July 2003, statements were made by Sani Abdallah, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Agriculture of Nigeria; Alfredo Chiaradia, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Nugroho Wisnumurti, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Murari Raj Sharma, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations; Alfred Dube, Permanent Representative of Botswana to the United Nations; Mohamed Ali Al-Malki, Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Amgad Maher Abdel Ghaffar, Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Achim Steiner, Director-General of The World Conservation Union; Husniyya Mammadova, Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan; Yeshey Dorji, Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the United Nations; Paul Essel, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Ghana to the United Nations; Murad Hamaima, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Mohamed-Salah Dembri, Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations Office at Geneva; and Pablo Morán, Permanent Representative of Peru to FAO.

33. At the same meeting, the representatives of UNIDO and the ILO Office to the United Nations made statements. Also, at the same meeting, the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions made a statement.

Action taken by the Council

34. At its 18th plenary meeting, on 2 July 2003, the President of the Council introduced the draft ministerial declaration submitted by the President of the Council, entitled "Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development", and orally corrected it. The Council then adopted the draft ministerial declaration, as orally corrected (E/2003/L.9).

35. At the same meeting, the President of the Council made a concluding statement. The Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs also made a statement. The text of the declaration read as follows:

Ministerial declaration
Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development

"1. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Economic and Social Council, held from 30 June to 2 July 2003:

(a) Having considered the theme 'Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development', the report of the Secretary-General on the subject[1] and the contribution of all the participants, including civil society, in the preparatory process of the high-level segment, held on 24 March and 30 April 2003;

(b) Recalling the Millennium Declaration[2] and the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences, summits and relevant special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, including the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, as well as the World Food Summit, held in Rome in 1996, and their five-year reviews, the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002;

(c) Taking note of the fact that rural areas of developing countries are home to three quarters of the world's poor and that insufficient progress has been made in recent years in addressing the issues of poverty, hunger and malnutrition;

(d) Recalling the commitment to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

(e) Recalling also General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 20 December 2002, entitled "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields";

Have adopted the following declaration.

"2. We are convinced that eradication of rural poverty and hunger is crucial for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. Rural development should be

an integral part of national and international development policies, including bilateral donor response strategies and the activities and programmes of the United Nations system.

"3. We express our serious concern regarding the famine facing millions of people, especially in Africa. Recognizing that food security is a global concern, we are committed to respond to the internationally recognized emergency food aid needs and to improve famine prevention mechanisms and long-term food security.

"4. Rural development should be pursued through an integrated approach, encompassing the economic, social and environmental dimensions, taking into account the gender perspective and consisting of mutually reinforcing policies and programmes. This approach should be balanced, targeted, situation specific, locally owned, include local synergies and initiatives and be responsive to the needs of rural populations.

"5. Rural development is the responsibility of each country and is predicated on an enabling national environment. An enabling international economic environment is important to support effective national development efforts, including rural development efforts. An enabling environment combines effective and coherent policies, good governance and accountable institutions at national and international levels as well as the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development. Robust, broad-based and equitable economic growth as well as human resource development are needed to fight rural poverty.

"6. In this regard, despite serious efforts to achieve progress, important issues in the implementation of the Doha Ministerial Declaration of the World Trade Organization, adopted at Doha on 20 November 2001,[3] are still outstanding, in particular regarding the commitments under the said declaration for, inter alia, comprehensive negotiations aimed at substantial improvements in market access. In the agricultural sector, without prejudging the outcome of negotiations, reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies, substantial reduction in trade-distorting domestic support and enhanced market access is needed. We recall that special and differential treatment for developing countries shall be an integral part of all elements of the negotiations and shall be embodied in the schedules of concessions and commitments and as appropriate in the rules and disciplines to be negotiated, so as to be operationally effective and to enable developing countries to effectively take account of their development needs, including food security and rural development. We take note of the non-trade concerns reflected in the negotiating proposals submitted by members and confirm that non-trade concerns will be taken into account in the negotiations, as provided for in the Agreement of Agriculture.

"7. As for non-agricultural products, we call for reduction or, as appropriate, removal of non-tariff barriers, tariff peaks, high tariffs and tariff escalation to enhance market access, in particular for products of export interest to developing countries.

"8. These matters must be urgently addressed by members of the World Trade Organization in order to ensure full implementation of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, including regarding implementation issues and special and differential treatment, and to make a success of the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization to be held in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003.

"9. We invite members of the World Trade Organization to implement the commitments regarding trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, so that they can benefit from liberalized trade opportunities and adopt measures to reduce supply-side constraints, including by improving productivity and product diversification and enhancing competitiveness and community-based entrepreneurial capacity. We urge them to facilitate the accession of developing countries to the Organization, in particular the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, taking into account the individual level of development of each country that applies for membership. In this regard, we welcome the recent agreement of the Organization to facilitate the accession of the least developed countries.

"10. We recognize the vulnerability of the commodity-dependent developing countries, in particular the low-income countries, to market fluctuations and stress the need to support their efforts for the diversification of exports as a means of increasing export earnings and improving terms of trade and to address the impact of the instability of commodity prices. In this context, it is very important to empower commodity producers in developing countries to insure themselves against risk. We underscore the need for reforming the existing facilities to respond to the needs of the rural poor.

"11. We urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national product of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, and we encourage developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets. We acknowledge the efforts of all donors, commend those donors whose official development assistance contributions exceed, reach or are increasing towards the targets, and underline the importance of undertaking to examine the means and time frames for achieving the targets and goals.

"12. Food security, rural and agricultural development must be adequately addressed in the context of national development and poverty eradication as well as in multilateral and bilateral donor response strategies. To that end, we deem it necessary to increase productive investment in rural and agricultural development to achieve lasting food security. We take note with satisfaction of the undertakings made by the members of the Group of Eight, as contained in the Action Plan against Famine, especially in Africa, adopted in Evian, France, on 3 June 2003, to work towards reversing the decline of official development assistance to agriculture and increasing trade opportunities for developing countries.

"13. External debt relief can play a key role in liberating resources that can then be directed towards activities consistent with attaining sustainable growth and development, and therefore, debt relief measures should, where appropriate, be pursued vigorously and expeditiously, including within the Paris and London Clubs and other relevant forums. Noting the importance of re-establishing financial viability for those developing countries facing unsustainable debt burdens, we welcome initiatives that have been undertaken to reduce outstanding indebtedness and invite further national and international measures in that regard, including, as appropriate, debt cancellation and other arrangements.

"14. We are committed to empowering poor women and men to play a full and effective role in their development by enabling them to have a larger voice in decision-making processes, including: resource allocation; promoting mechanisms, including the self-organization of poor people, to influence the market and public policies; and ensuring that poor rural people and their organizations have the opportunity to participate fully in the design, development and implementation of rural development strategies and programmes.

"15. We are also committed to the empowerment of rural women at all levels and in all aspects of rural development, including agriculture, nutrition and food security, and to ensuring that the work of women is recognized and valued. We will ensure women's equal access to land, property, adequate housing, economic opportunity, credit, education, skills training and health care, economic welfare, the right to inheritance and the right to contractual agreements, as well as empowerment through full participation in decision-making at all levels.

"16. We call for greater access to financial services and labour markets for the rural poor, in particular women, indigenous people and vulnerable groups, and to this end we undertake to simplify existing mechanisms and to facilitate the establishment and strengthening of rural financial institutions, including micro-credit, savings and insurance facilities and cooperative ventures for rural development, as well as the development of professional associations and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

"17. We resolve to promote broad-based economic growth in developing countries and countries with economies in transition by strengthening sustainable agricultural and food policies, improving agricultural productivity, including for basic food commodities, and fostering non-farm rural economic activities.

"18. We further resolve to enhance the livelihood of the rural poor by aiming to ensure that they have access to adequate quantities of safe and nutritious food and by creating productive and remunerative on- and off-farm employment opportunities, including through the diversification of the rural economy and employment-generating strategies. In this regard, we will encourage South-South cooperation, including the sharing of experiences and best practices.

"19. We reaffirm that sustainable agriculture and rural development are essential to the implementation of an integrated approach to food security and

safety in an environmentally sustainable way. We recognize the important role of rural populations in sustainably managing natural resources, including biodiversity, and in combating desertification and land degradation. We pledge to promote environmentally sound and sustainable natural resources management, including the implementation of integrated land management, sustainable forest management programmes and water-use plans and the use of traditional and indigenous knowledge and practices as well as modern technologies of sustainable resource use and management. We also acknowledge the need, subject to national legislation, to implement actions at all levels to recognize the rights of local and indigenous communities that are holders of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices and, with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices, to develop and implement benefit-sharing mechanisms on mutually agreed terms for their use.

"20. We commit ourselves to strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa and to addressing the causes of desertification and land degradation, in order to maintain and restore land, as well as poverty resulting from land degradation.

"21. We recognize the key role of alternative development strategies for sustainable development of the rural areas affected by the illicit cultivation of narcotic plants and call for the promotion of such strategies.

"22. We call for concrete steps at both the national and international levels to mobilize public and private investment as well as to enhance access to credit for the development of the physical rural infrastructure in order to enhance productivity and improve access to markets and information.

"23. We recognize that research and its effective application are crucial for the development and implementation of appropriate new technologies that are pro-poor and raise on- and off-farm productivity. To that end, we underline the need for measures to increase investment in agricultural research, including modern technologies, natural resources management and capacity-building. We also call for measures to enhance and expand access to information and communication technologies in the rural areas of developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

"24. We recognize the crucial importance of enhanced access of the rural poor, women and men, to productive assets, in particular land and water, and stress that priority attention should be given to the adoption of policies and the implementation of laws that guarantee well-defined and enforceable land- and water-use rights and promote legal security of tenure, recognizing the existence of different national laws and/or systems of land access and tenure.

"25. We also call for enhanced access to social services for poor people in rural and remote areas. We are committed to improving access to quality education for the rural poor, especially the girl child, through increased investment and full utilization of modern techniques and technologies, including the establishment of remote education systems.

"26. We recognize the critical link between HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, cholera, typhus and other serious diseases and rural development, as well as

their negative impact on the agricultural sector. We also recognize the importance of health, including reproductive health, to: rural development and the eradication of poverty; reducing infant, child and maternal mortality; combating HIV/AIDS; and promoting equality and empowerment among the rural poor, especially women.

"27. We emphasize that full implementation of the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and public health, adopted by the World Trade Organization at Doha on 20 November 2001,[4] including its paragraph 6, is important for tackling public health problems, especially those resulting from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other epidemics.

"28. We are deeply concerned about the devastating impact of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, which undermines efforts to eradicate poverty. We recognize that HIV/AIDS has serious debilitating consequences for societies, particularly in Africa. We are therefore committed to the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS concerns into rural development planning, including poverty eradication and food security strategies and multisectoral development activities covering economic and social aspects, taking into account the particular situation of rural women.

"29. Bearing in mind that the majority of indigenous people live in rural areas, we recognize the need to implement policies and programmes to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development that are focused on them, taking into account their traditional knowledge and their special relationship with the land.

"30. We reaffirm the goal of expanding access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, particularly in the rural areas of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and express our resolve to the expeditious realization of that goal, in accordance with the commitments contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.[5]

"31. We also reaffirm the need to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources, taking into account national specificities and circumstances, through various means, such as enhanced rural electrification and decentralized energy systems, increased use of renewables, cleaner liquid and gaseous fuels and enhanced energy efficiency, as well as by intensifying regional and international cooperation in support of national efforts, including through capacity-building, financial and technological assistance and innovative financing mechanisms, including at the micro- and meso-levels, recognizing the specific factors for providing access to the poor.

"32. We undertake to promote rural-urban linkages by developing and strengthening a system of intermediate-size secondary and tertiary towns to stimulate rural development, as well as to minimize the negative impacts of rural-urban migration. At the same time, we will encourage programmes and policies designed to strengthen rural service centre and small town systems, including strengthening institutions and mechanisms for local or regional planning.

"33. We are committed to responding effectively to Africa's special needs for achieving sustainable development and to lending our full support to the development and implementation of national policies and programmes for rural development in Africa. To this end, we reiterate our support for the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the call to channel financial, technical and other types of resources towards the priorities of the New Partnership, in particular infrastructural development, health services, education, water and agriculture. We underline the importance of implementing the initiatives contained in the New Partnership, in particular those designed to enhance market access and the diversification of production in African economies, which are vulnerable because of their dependence on primary production and natural resources-based sectors.

"34. We recognize the special needs of the least developed countries and reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of outcomes of the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, in particular the elements related to rural development, enhanced market access and provision for enhanced technical assistance and support for capacity-building.

"35. Recognizing also the special challenges in rural development faced by small island developing States, we reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and emphasize in this regard the importance of the international meeting to be held in Mauritius in 2004. Noting also that the geographical situation of the landlocked developing countries is an added constraint on their efforts to promote rural development, we call for the implementation of specific actions related to the particular needs of those countries.

"36. We underline the importance of partnerships at the national and international levels to foster collaboration among actors in different sectors. At the national and local levels, we will encourage local authorities, civil society, the private sector and local communities to launch partnerships that support and promote rural development. At the international level, we will facilitate and nurture alliances of Governments, donors, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector for the promotion of integrated rural development.

"37. We welcome the work of the organizations of the United Nations system in eradicating rural poverty and promoting rural development and urge them to ensure that measures are implemented to simplify, harmonize and integrate assessment procedures and programming so as to reduce transaction costs and avoid additional procedural requirements for programme countries and enhance support for their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, especially those contained in the Millennium Declaration. We emphasize that national and international poverty reduction strategies should target rural areas and households more systematically by integrating poverty eradication and food security as well as environmental objectives more firmly in poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, as well as in common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. We urge the international and regional financial institutions to

enhance their support for rural poverty eradication and rural development in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

"38. We commit ourselves to the implementation of the present declaration and call upon civil society, the organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant actors and organizations to lend their full support to the realization of the objectives of integrated rural development for poverty eradication and sustainable development. We agree to review progress or lack thereof in the implementation of the present declaration at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 2005."

Notes

[1] E/2003/51.

[2] General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[3] WT/MIN (01)/DEC/1.

[4] WT/MIN (01)/DEC/2.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.